

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) A mail processing apparatus comprising:
a track over which paper sheets are adapted to pass in sequence;
a moving mechanism that is adapted to move the sheets along the track; and

an inserting mechanism that is adapted to add an insert to one of the sheets while on the track, wherein the inserting mechanism includes;

a grasping mechanism that is adapted to grasp and move the insert onto the sheet, the grasping mechanism swinging ~~traveling~~ in a first direction about a hinge point prior to grasping the insert and swinging in a second direction about the hinge point to move the insert; and

a nozzle positioned above the track that is adapted to direct a gas stream onto the insert to hold the insert to the sheet, ~~thereby facilitating the passage of~~ so that the grasping mechanism passes over both the sheet and the insert when the grasping mechanism is moving in the first direction to grasp a subsequent insert for a subsequent sheet.

12. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 11 wherein said inserting mechanism comprises a bin to hold a stack of inserts, and at least one vacuum finger to pull a bottom insert from said stack where it is grasped by said grasping mechanism.

13. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 11 wherein said nozzle is coupled to said grasping mechanism.

14. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 11 wherein said nozzle comprises an elongate slit for directing said gas stream.

15. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 11 wherein said moving mechanism comprises a pair of fingers that move along said track.

16. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 11 further comprising a sensor that is adapted to detect if the insert has been grasped by said grasping mechanism.

17. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 16 wherein said sensor comprises a pressure sensor.

18. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 16 wherein said sensor comprises an optical sensor.

19. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 16 further comprising an indicator that is adapted to indicate if said grasping mechanism fails to grasp said insert.

20. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 19 wherein said indicator further comprises an interrupt circuit coupled to and adapted to stop operation of said moving mechanism and said inserting mechanism, if said grasping mechanism fails to grasp said insert.

21. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 11 further comprising a sensor that is adapted to detect if more than one insert has been grasped by said grasping mechanism.

22. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 21 further comprising an indicator that is adapted to operate if said grasping mechanism grasps more than one said insert.

23. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 22 wherein said indicator further comprises an interrupt circuit coupled to and adapted to stop operation of said moving mechanism and said inserting mechanism, if said grasping mechanism grasps more than one said insert.

24. (Currently amended) A method of processing mail, said method comprising:

passing first and second paper sheets along a track; and
adding an insert to said first sheet, said adding comprising;

grasping said insert with a swinging grasping mechanism;
moving said insert onto said first sheet to form a stack, the
moving comprising swinging the grasping mechanism in a second direction;

releasing said insert from said grasping mechanism; and
holding said insert to said first sheet, said holding
comprising directing a gas stream onto said insert, and wherein said holding is adapted to facilitate the passage of the grasping mechanism over the stacked first sheet and insert when the grasping mechanism is swinging in a first direction to grasp ~~grasping~~ a subsequent insert for the second sheet.

25. (Original) The method as in claim 24 further comprising sensing whether said grasping mechanism has grasped only one insert using a sensor.

26. (Previously presented) The method as in claim 25 further comprising ceasing said passing and adding if said sensor indicates that said grasping mechanism failed to grasp said insert.

27. (Previously presented) The method as in 25 further comprising ceasing said passing and adding if said sensor indicates that said grasping mechanism grasped more than one said insert.

28. (Currently amended) A mail processing apparatus comprising;
a track;
an envelope feeder that is adapted to feed an envelope onto the track;
an inserting mechanism that is adapted to place inserts into the envelope; and
a nozzle system that is adapted to direct a gas into the envelope to hold the envelope open for the inserts, wherein the nozzle system comprises;
a central nozzle that is adapted to direct said gas into a central region of the envelope; and
a side nozzle that is adapted to direct said gas near an edge of the envelope;
wherein the central and side nozzles are fixedly coupled together using a fixture in a non-parallel arrangement; and
wherein the central nozzle is larger than the side nozzle.

29. (Original) The mail processing apparatus as in claim 28 further comprising a gas adjust nozzle to control a flow rate of said gas through said side nozzle.

30. (Canceled)

31. (Previously presented) A method of processing mail, said method comprising;
providing an insert to be placed into an envelope;
feeding the envelope onto a track, said envelope having an opening; and

directing a gas into the opening to hold open the envelope to facilitate receipt of the insert by the envelope, said directing comprising;
directing the gas with a central nozzle in a first direction into a central region of the envelope opening; and
directing the gas with a side nozzle in a second direction near an edge of the envelope opening;
wherein the first and second directions are non-parallel and wherein the central nozzle is larger than the side nozzle.

32. (Previously presented) The apparatus as in claim 11 further comprising a deflector adapted to deflect the insert from the grasping mechanism and towards the sheet.

33. (Previously presented) The apparatus as in claim 32 wherein the nozzle is coupled to the deflector.

34. (Previously presented) The method as in claim 24 wherein releasing the insert comprises moving the insert to engage a deflector to help separate the insert from the grasping mechanism.

35. (Canceled)